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For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, News Division, Office of Public Affairs, Room 406-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-4026.

OIL-HERBICIDE MIXTURE REDUCES WEEDS AND COSTS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23--Mixing herbicides with an oil instead of water could improve farmers' profits and the environment by reducing the amount of herbicide needed, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists said.

"Herbicides are commonly mixed with water and some type of oil to boost their weed-killing ability," said Chester G. McWhorter, a plant physiologist with the Pesticide Application Technology Research Unit of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. "We've found that it is possible to totally eliminate the water and still have effective weed control."

In four years of field tests at Stoneville, Miss., McWhorter, and James Hanks, an agricultural engineer, found barnyardgrass and johnsongrass could be controlled with less herbicide when the herbicide was mixed with paraffinic oil rather than water.

They applied the herbicide and oil at a combined total volume of as little as one quart of liquid per acre, compared with the usual 20-gallon-per-acre mixture of herbicide and water. The lower total volume would require fewer trips with spray equipment to treat an entire field for weeds.

Paraffinic oil is similar to mineral oil. McWhorter said the paraffinic oil-herbicide mixture provided better weed control than herbicide mixed with soybean oil, cottonseed oil, No. 2nd diesel fuel, kerosene or jet A fuel.

Agricultural engineers at the ARS Jamie Whitten Delta States Research Center at Stoneville have already developed an ultra-low-volume (ULV) herbicide sprayer system that would allow farmers to apply herbicides at volumes of less than one gallon per acre.

There may be several reasons for the increased weed control observed when using low-volume--1 to 3 gallons per acre--and ultra-low-volume applications with oil alone as the carrier, McWhorter said.

"The ULV sprayer applies smaller, more concentrated droplets that are more toxic to the weeds," he said. "Also, oil spreads much better than water on leaf surfaces."

Reduced herbicide application rates are not specifically approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, but growers can legally apply herbicide rates lower than those recommended on the product label, McWhorter said. Farmers would be able to easily construct their own ULV spray system for both low-volume and ultra-low-volume use.

A report on the research project appears in the February issue of Agricultural Research magazine, the monthly publication of the Agricultural Research Service.



Release No. 0140.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23--Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Charles J. O'Mara today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 8.25 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 7.41 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 7.38 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.12 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, loan deficiency payment rates and gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price level are:

- for long grain, \$1.57 per hundredweight;
- for medium grain, \$1.47 per hundredweight;
- for short grain, \$1.48 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made March 2 at 3 p.m. EST.



Release No. 0141.93
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WHITE LUPIN, A TIMELY GRAIN CROP FOR 1990'S

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24--A grain crop rich in fiber and protein was way ahead of its time in the 1950's, but the 1990's are perfect for new versions of white lupin, say U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers.

Wayne Reeves, an agronomist for USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Auburn, Ala., said that the grain's ability to make its own nitrogen wasn't attractive in the '50s when fertilizer was cheap and nitrate pollution of groundwater was unknown. The current movement to low-input, sustainable agriculture has renewed interest, Reeves said.

Also, today's health-food market creates additional demand for lupin, Reeves said, because lupin adds fiber to foods such as pasta made from a mix of wheat and lupin flour. Lupin flour also can be used in breads, pastries, cereals, pancake and baking mixes," he said. "It provides a complete protein."

There are only a handful of scientists working on lupin, Reeves said, including William M. Clapham, a plant physiologist at the ARS New England Plant, Soil and Water Laboratory at Orono, Maine. "Some breeders have recently begun releasing varieties but these are for spring planting only," Reeves said, "except for Tifwhite-78, a winter-hardy variety released by ARS in 1980."

Reeves said he is working with breeders using Tifwhite as a starting point to develop varieties with winter-hardiness combined with better growth and disease resistance. He warns not to expect a winter-hardy variety to be commercially available for another 10 years.

Reeves said lupin was abandoned in the Southeast where it formed a "Lupin Belt" in the 1940's. Consecutive hard freezes in the early 1950s wiped out lupin seed. This--coupled with disease, cheap fertilizer, and government price supports encouraging other crops--spelled the beginning of the end for lupin in the south, he said.

Reeves said that a variety like Tifwhite that can withstand cold spells that surprise warm-weather states would mean farmers in the south and California could grow two crops a year--lupin in winter and a different one in summer.

"It would be a profitable winter cover crop for the Southeast if it brought anywhere near soybean's current value of \$5 or more a bushel, on a average," he said.

As a summer crop, lupin can be grown farther north than soybean, even into Canada, Reeves said. "Lupin would allow northern dairy farmers to grow their own protein feed, rather than buy soybean or other protein meals."

Clapham said lupin's yields can exceed soybean's in the extreme northern edge of the soybean belt.

Lupin also could be an ideal partner for Maine potatoes, alternating over 3 years with potatoes and small grains, said Clapham, who has been experimenting with lupin for the past several years.

"One of the valuable things about lupin is that it's a feed grain that's also a nitrogen-fixing legume," Reeves said. "Like soybean, it can be rotated with other crops to restore nitrogen to the soil. Unlike its main competitor in the Southeast, winter wheat, it doesn't need nitrogen fertilizer."

If lupin replaced a quarter of the wheat acreage in the Southeast, it could save 95,000 tons of nitrogen fertilizer a year, worth about \$50 million, he said.

After growing Tifwhite-78 for four winters, Reeves said he has found that when grown as a green manure, it can add up to 200 pounds of nitrogen an acre to the soil. He said it has yielded up to 60 bushels of grain per acre.

Also, when unfertilized grain sorghum grew in former lupin fields, it outyielded fertilized sorghum in other fields. "No amount of fertilizer overcame the lupin advantage."

Reeves doesn't yet know the reason. "It could be the taproot," he said. "Australians call lupin a biological plow because of the way it pierces hard soil. It could be that lupin improves the soil in ways other than adding nitrogen."

Reeves is working with Edzard van Santen, a plant breeder with the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station at Auburn University. Reeves said the Auburn researchers--like those in California, the upper Midwest and France--are particularly interested in developing varieties that will put more of the plant's energy into producing valuable grain than into making tall plants with lots of branches.

Besides stopping wasteful plant growth, Reeves and van Santen want to improve lupin's resistance to the fungal diseases that threaten all legumes in wet fields.

Seeds of a limited, but growing, number of lupin varieties are currently being sold in the upper Midwest, said Gene Aksland, a plant breeder at Resource Seeds, Inc., in California. Aksland supplies breeding seed to Tom Gallenberg of Wolf River Valley Seeds in Wisconsin.

Gallenberg said that his company is focusing on spring lupin for the North, but that Aksland's breeding work can have applications in the South just as Reeves' and van Santen's work can for the upper Midwest.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details, contact Wayne Reeve, agronomist, Soil Dynamics Research Laboratory, USDA, ARS, Auburn, Ala. 36831-0792. Telephone (205) 844.3996.

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Release No. 0143.93
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USDA TO INCREASE FEES FOR PROCESSED PRODUCTS GRADING

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24--The U.S. Department of Agriculture will increase fees for certain voluntary (i.e. industry-requested) inspection, grading and certification of processed fruits and vegetables.

L.P. Massaro, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said, "The changes are necessary because of increased costs."

The basic rate charged users who have not signed term contracts for services will rise from the current \$34.50 to \$37 per hour. The basic hourly rate for overtime will be one and one-half the new hourly rate.

For those with signed term contracts the fees will increase:

--From the current \$29 to \$32 per hour for yearly in-plant full-time services of a minimum 40 hours per week.

--From 34.50 to \$37 per hour for full-time in-plant services for less than a year and more than four weeks' duration.

The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 requires that fees be reasonable, and as nearly as possible, cover the cost of the services.

Notice of the increases will appear in today's Federal Register. Copies and further information may be obtained from Raymondo O'Neal, Processed Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, USDA, Room 0723-S, P.O.Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 720-5021.

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U.S. AND CANADA AGREE TO ALLOW POTATO SHIPMENTS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24--The United States and Canada have agreed to procedural changes in how they will administer their phytosanitary requirements designed to prevent the introduction of the necrotic strain of potato virus Y (PVYn).

The agreement will allow U.S. potatoes to be exported to Canada from all states that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has found free of PVYn.

"While remaining committed to protecting this nation from PVYn and other plant and animal diseases, we will work hand-in-hand with our trading partners to ensure that phytosanitary requirements do not hamper trade," said Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy.

"This is a vivid example of the cooperation and mutual trust between countries that will be the cornerstone of this administration's teamwork on trade issues," said U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor.

As a result of the agreement, USDA has established an interim rule removing certain restrictions on Canadian potatoes, including the restriction on the noninfested progeny of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Quebec potatoes that are grown in other provinces.

In addition, USDA dropped the requirement for specific leaf sampling and testing.

The rule becomes effective today and will be published in a future Federal Register. Those wishing to comment on the action may send an original and three copies of their written comments, referring to docket 93-021-1, to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141-S, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.



Release No. 0145.93
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USDA RELEASES COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR DECEMBER

WASHINGTON, February 25--Here is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's monthly update of the weekly cost of food at home for December 1992:

COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR A WEEK IN DECEMBER 1992

	----- Food plans -----			
	Thrifty	Low-cost	Moderate-cost	Liberal
	(in dollars)			
<hr/>				
Families:				
Family of 2				
(20-50 years)	49.60	62.80	77.20	96.00
Family of 2				
(51 years and over)	46.90	60.40	74.20	88.80
Family of 4 with				
preschool children	72.30	90.50	110.40	135.60
Family of 4 with elementary				
schoolchildren	82.80	106.30	132.60	159.70

Individuals in four-person families:

Children:

1-2 years	13.10	16.00	18.70	22.60
3-5 years	14.10	17.40	21.50	25.70
6-8 years	17.20	23.00	28.80	33.60
9-11 years	20.50	26.20	33.60	38.80

Males:

12-14 years	21.30	29.70	37.00	43.40
15-19 years	22.00	30.60	38.10	44.10
20-50 years	23.70	30.40	37.80	45.80
51 and over	21.40	28.90	35.50	42.50

Females:

12-19 years	21.40	25.70	31.20	37.60
20-50 years	21.40	26.70	32.40	41.50
51 and over	21.20	26.00	32.00	38.20

USDA's Human Nutrition Information Service computes the cost of food at home for four food plans -- thrifty, low-cost, moderate-cost, and liberal.

David Rust, HNIS acting administrator, said the plans consist of foods that provide well-balanced meals and snacks for a week.

In computing the costs, USDA assumes all food is bought at the store and prepared at home. Costs do not include alcoholic beverages, pet food, soap, cigarettes, paper goods and other nonfood items bought at the store.

"USDA costs are only guides to spending," Rust said. "Families may spend more or less, depending on such factors as where they buy their food, how carefully they plan and buy, whether some food is produced at home, what foods the family likes, and how much food is prepared at home."

"Most families will find the moderate-cost or low-cost plan suitable," he said. "The thrifty plan, which USDA uses to set the coupon allotment in the food stamp program, is for families who have tighter budgets. Families with unlimited resources might use the liberal plan."

To use the chart to estimate your family's food costs:

-- For members eating all meals at home -- or carried from home -- use the amounts shown in the chart.

-- For members eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent for each meal eaten away from home from the amount shown for the appropriate family member. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent, or one-fourth the cost shown.

-- For guests, add 5 percent of the amount shown for the proper age group for each meal.

Costs in the second part of the chart pertain to individuals in four-person families. If your family has more or less than four, total the "individual" figures and make these adjustments (note: larger families tend to buy and use food more economically than smaller ones):

-- For a one-person family, add 20 percent.

-- For a two-person family, add 10 percent.

-- For a three-person family, add 5 percent.

-- For a five- or six-person family, subtract 5 percent.

-- For a family of seven or more, subtract 10 percent.

Details of the four family food plans are available from the Nutrition Education Division, Human Nutrition Information Service, USDA, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.



NEW RICE HAS NUTRITIONAL BOOST THAT COULD RAISE CROP'S EXPORT VALUE

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25--High-tech rice that's nutritionally richer in an essential amino acid could boost the value of U.S. rice exports, said a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

Commercial rice--like all major cereal crops--is low in lysine. The new rice has 15 percent more lysine--one of several essential amino acids in the diet--than plants from a commercial variety, Calrose 76, said plant physiologist Gideon Schaeffer at USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

Schaeffer developed the new rice in 10 years of research with high-lysine plants he grew from specially selected rice cells. He did the work at the Plant Molecular Biology Laboratory at the Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Md., .

The higher lysine content makes the rice a more nutritionally balanced source of protein, Schaeffer said. So when breeders develop commercial varieties from his new strains in the next few years, U.S. rice growers should have a higher value crop for export markets, he said.

"High-lysine rice could improve the diet of people in developing countries, such as those in Africa and Asia where rice is the main--sometimes nearly the only--protein source," Schaeffer said in a story in the latest issue of Agricultural Research magazine.

Later this year, the Agricultural Research Center expects to release the first five strains of Schaeffer's high-lysine rice to breeders. "Traditionally, breeders in this country have been most interested in yield--that's the producers' first requirement," he said. "But high-lysine grain, with yield and other qualities similar to commercial varieties, should be worth more and will have higher nutritional value."

Schaeffer first developed high-lysine rice plants by starting with immature rice pollen cells that had a useful genetic mutation: they could churn out more lysine than cells lacking the mutation. Schaeffer grew thousands of whole, seed-bearing plants from the mutant cells. He then ran several years of lab and field studies to identify the best candidates to release to breeders.

ARS scientists in Arkansas, Texas and California grew Schaeffer's rice under field conditions and found that the high-lysine trait was expressed and inherited.



Release No. 0147.93
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USDA TO ALLOW IMPORT OF PREVIOUSLY PROHIBITED FRUIT

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25--A new U.S. Department of Agriculture proposal would allow the importation of previously banned fruits and vegetables into the United States.

"This action would make available a greater variety of fruit and vegetables for consumers while continuing to protect American agriculture from exotic pests," said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

The proposal would allow importation of bananas from Belize; pineapple guava, mandarin oranges, papayas and peaches from Bermuda; carambola, lemongrass, tossa jute and ginger from the Cook Islands; fenugreek from Jamaica; aster greens, cucurbits, youngia greens, strawberries and dasheen from South Korea; fenugreek from Panama; turmeric from St. Vincent and the Grenadines; burdock from Taiwan; pumpkins from Tonga; snow peas from Zambia; and yam bean from Costa Rica.

APHIS has determined that these fruits and vegetables do not pose a risk to U.S. agriculture.

The proposal also would allow the importation of other fruits after treatment for fruit flies. These include apples from Guyana; litchi from Israel; grapes from Jordan; and apples, kiwi and pears from Zimbabwe.

All of the fruits and vegetables would be inspected at the port of first arrival into the United States.

Most of the fruits and vegetables proposed for importation are either not grown in the United States or are grown in small quantities, Lee said.

Notice of the proposal will be published in the Feb. 25 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before April 12. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 92-070-1 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141-S, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays.



Release No. 0148.93
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SALMONELLA OUTBREAKS DECLINE SINCE 1989; FOOD HANDLING PROBLEMS PERSIST

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced the annual total of reported Salmonella enteritidis (SE) outbreaks has decreased by about 30 percent over the past three years.

"We are committed to continuing to reduce the number of SE outbreaks," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"Public health agencies continue to report outbreaks to our SE control program," Johnson said. "Even though we are working to reduce SE bacteria in the food supply, the public can greatly minimize the risk of infection by proper cooking and storage of food."

The majority of SE outbreaks that were investigated over the last two years occurred in restaurants or food service facilities and resulted from unsafe food handling.

The most common food handling mistakes made by food preparers and servers included the practice of pooling large numbers of raw eggs, not cooking them thoroughly and not refrigerating them before or after preparation.

"We ask the public to join our commitment to reduce the risk of SE outbreaks by cooking and storing their food properly to prevent any contamination," Johnson said.

In 1989, the number of SE outbreaks reported to APHIS' SE control program peaked at 77. Last year, the total number of outbreaks declined to 55. The number of human isolations of the SE bacteria decreased from 8,572 cases in 1990 to 7,712 reported cases in 1991.

If fresh eggs are implicated in an SE outbreak, the SE control program works to locate the infected poultry flocks to divert contaminated eggs to pasteurization plants, Johnson said.

Since its inception in 1990, the control program has found 22 SE-positive poultry flocks from 55 SE egg-related outbreaks. These detections resulted in the pasteurization of more than one billion eggs.



Release No. 0149.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25--Randy Weber, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to

U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. Thursday, Mar. 4. The user marketing certificate payment rate announced today is in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Feb. 26, through midnight Thursday, Mar. 4.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the Northern Europe (NE) price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 92 percent of the 1992 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 4.05 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I.	Calculated AWP	48.12 cents per pound
	1992 Base Loan Rate	52.35 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	92
II.	USNE Price	65.85 cents per pound
	NE Price	<u>-61.80</u> cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	4.05 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made.

This week's AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

<u>Adjusted World Price</u>	
NE Price	61.80
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	11.82
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.55
Average U.S. location	0.31
Sum of Adjustments	<u>- 13.68</u>
Calculated AWP	48.12
Further AWP adjustment	<u>- 0</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	48.12 cents/lb.
<u>Coarse Count Adjustment</u>	
NE Price	61.80
NE Coarse Count Price	<u>- 57.05</u>
	4.75
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	<u>- 3.95</u>
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT.....	0.80 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below the 1991 and 1992 base quality loan rates of 50.77 and 52.35 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Because the AWP is below the 1992-crop loan rate, cash loan deficiency payments will be paid to eligible producers who agree to forgo obtaining a price support loan with respect to the 1992 crop. The payment rate is equal to the difference between the loan rate and the AWP. Producers are allowed to obtain a loan deficiency payment on a bale-by-bale basis.

The USNE price has exceeded the NE price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1992 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the user marketing certificate payment rate is 2.80 cents per pound. This rate is applicable for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to September 30, 1993. Relevant data used in determining the user marketing certificate payment rate are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Price	NE Price	USNE Minus NE	User Certificate Payment Rate 1/
		cents per pound	
1	Feb. 4, 1993	61.95	58.73	3.22	1.97
2	Feb. 11, 1993	65.15	60.26	4.89	3.64
3	Feb. 18, 1993	65.95	60.94	5.01	3.76
4	Feb. 25, 1993	65.85	61.80	4.05	2.80

1/ USNE price minus NE price minus 1.25 cents.

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rate will be announced on Thursday, Mar. 4.

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Release No. 0150.93
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U.S. TO DONATE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES TO WORLD FOOD PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced the United States has pledged 655,000 metric tons of corn and butteroil to the World Food Program, an agency of the United Nations.

The \$195 million donation includes 14,000 metric tons of butteroil valued at \$24.5 million and 641,000 tons of corn valued at \$61.5 million. The remainder will finance ocean freight and internal distribution costs.

"This donation reaffirms the United States' commitment to relieve hunger and malnutrition in the world's poorest countries," said Espy. "It will help the WFP respond to increasing emergency food needs worldwide, especially the refugees in Africa and those affected by the drought in Southern Africa."

The commodities for emergency programs (381,000 metric tons) will be distributed in Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia and Swaziland. The balance will serve ongoing programs in Latin America, the Caribbean area, Asia and Africa.

The donation will be made under Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, which authorizes the donation of surplus commodities owned by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation to needy people overseas. The supply period is fiscal year 1993.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, Foreign Agricultural Service, (202) 720-5263.

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U.S. TO DONATE WHEAT AND RICE TO ARMENIA

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced the United States will donate more than 75,000 tons wheat and rice to Armenia under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food for Progress program.

The \$18 million donation will include about 50,000 metric tons of wheat valued at \$7.7 million and 27,000 tons of rice valued at \$6.5 million. The remainder will finance related ocean transportation costs.

Food aid donations help both recipient countries and U.S. farmers and taxpayers, said Espy.

"Armenia benefits by getting much needed wheat and rice," he said. "U.S. farmers benefit because donations help take commodity supplies off the U.S. market at times when those supplies are excessive. As a result, this can enhance producer prices at a time when this is needed.

"In addition, these donations may help reduce budget outlays because they may reduce government expenditures under the target price provisions of the domestic farm program," said Espy.

Under the Food for Progress program, USDA provides commodities to needy countries to encourage agricultural reform.

The wheat and rice will be purchased by USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service using Public 480, Title I funds. The government of Armenia will arrange ocean transportation.

The supply period for this donation is fiscal 1993.

For more information, contact Jim Higgiston or Casey Bean, USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, at (202) 720-5319.



Release No. 0153.93
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USDA CHANGES ANIMAL DISEASE STATUS OF SPAIN

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today declared Spain free of rinderpest, foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), hog cholera and swine vesicular disease (SVD). These are dangerous communicable diseases of ruminants and swine.

"Rinderpest and SVD have never been reported in Spain, and the last outbreaks of FMD and hog cholera took place, in 1986 and 1985, respectively," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"We are confident Spain is free of these diseases, and it is safe to relax our import restrictions on Spanish ruminants and swine and derivative animal products," he said.

The new rule removes all restrictions on Spanish dairy products. The importation of meat and meat products from ruminants and swine will remain subject to restrictions because Spain imports meat and meat products from countries not recognized as free of rinderpest, FMD or SVD. The importation of certain pork and pork products is prohibited because another serious disease, African swine fever, is still present in Spain.

The final rule became effective upon publication in the Feb. 25 Federal Register.



USDA DECLARES MISSISSIPPI AND MISSOURI FREE OF SWINE BRUCELLOSIS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has determined that Mississippi and Missouri are free of swine brucellosis. These states join 38 others, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, which have eradicated this serious disease from their swine populations.

"The combined efforts of state officials, veterinarians, the livestock industry and many others helped make this accomplishment possible," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "We have taken another positive step toward our goal of eradicating brucellosis in domestic swine."

Under the Cooperative State-Federal Brucellosis Eradication Program, validated brucellosis-free status is attained when no swine in a state have been found to be infected during the previous 24 months and other program requirements are met. USDA lifts certain interstate movement restrictions from states achieving free status.

Brucellosis, also called Bang's disease, is an infectious, contagious bacterial disease that causes abortion, infertility, and other symptoms in livestock, primarily swine and cattle. Johnson said both Mississippi and Missouri are well on the way to eradicating the disease in cattle.

The interim rule declaring Mississippi and Missouri free of swine brucellosis became effective on publication in the Feb. 25 Federal Register.

Comments on the action will be accepted if they are received on or before April 26. An original and three copies of written comments referring to Docket 92-184-1 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141-S, 14th and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.



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USDA ALLOWS HONEYDEW MELON IMPORTS FROM BRAZIL

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26--The U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a final rule today removing the prohibition on importing honeydew melons from certain areas of Brazil.

"We believe the fruit can safely enter the United States from specific Brazilian provinces that are free of the South American cucurbit fly," said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

This pest is exotic to the United States and is the only injurious insect known to attack honeydew melons in Brazil that is not readily detectable by inspection.

Lee said the fruit must be packed in an enclosed container or vehicle or under a tarpaulin cover while in transit as a precaution against introducing the cucurbit fly. In addition, all shipments of melons must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate that includes a declaration indicating they were grown in an area free of the cucurbit fly.

Lee said honeydew melons from Brazil will not compete significantly with U.S. melons because the growing and shipping seasons do not overlap.

The proposed revision was published in the Nov. 30 Federal Register, and comments were accepted until Dec. 15. The final rule became effective upon publication in the Feb. 25 Federal Register.



USDA TAKES STEPS TO PROTECT VETERINARY BIOLOGICS PATENTS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced new rules to bring its regulations on veterinary biologics in line with provisions of the Generic Animal Drug and Patent Term Restoration Act of 1988.

This Act amends U.S. patent laws to enable patent owners to extend the duration of the patent and make up for time lost awaiting premarketing approval from the government, according to John Payne, acting director of biotechnology, biologics and environmental protection in USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"APHIS is responsible for licensing animal vaccines and other veterinary biological products to assure they are pure, safe, potent and effective," Payne said. "The testing process can extend the time a patent is granted for such products; therefore, provisions should be made to accommodate patent holders as provided by the new law.

The new procedures assist the Department of Commerce's Patent Trademark Office in determining whether an applicant has waited long enough to obtain premarket approval to be eligible for an extension of his or her patent term.

A memorandum of understanding between APHIS and the Patent Trademark Office covering each agency's responsibilities for patent term extension was published in the June 23, 1989, Federal Register.

The new APHIS rules were published as a proposal in the July 13, 1992, Federal Register, with a comment period ending Sept. 11, 1992. One comment was received, and suggestions were taken into account in drafting the final rules.

The final rules were published in the Feb. 25 Federal Register and will take effect March 29. They will constitute a new Part 124 to existing regulations in Title 9, Chapter I, Code of Federal Regulations.



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USDA TARGETS THREE COUNTRIES UNDER SUNFLOWERSEED OIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26--Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Charles J. O'Mara today announced an additional opportunity for sales of U.S. sunflower-seed oil to Guatemala, and new opportunities for sales to Slovenia and El Salvador under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Sunflowerseed Oil Assistance Program.

The allocations in metric tons are as follows:

Guatemala	15,000
Slovenia	10,000
<u>El Salvador</u>	<u>15,000</u>
Total	40,000

The initiatives to Slovenia and El Salvador are the 9th and 10th announced under the SOAP.

Sales of sunflowerseed oil will be made through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. Sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses by USDA.

The allocations will be valid until Sept. 30. Details of the program, including invitations for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information call Randy Baxter, (202) 720-5540, or Larry McElvain, (202) 720-6211.



USDA HOTLINE OFFERS SLOW COOKER ADVICE

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24--For preparing soups, stews, and other wintertime favorites, many callers to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline prefer the convenience of a slow cooker.

These countertop appliances cook foods slowly at a low temperature, so vitamins and minerals are retained, less expensive cuts of meat are tenderized and meats shrink less. Best of all, the slow cooker can do all this while you're away from home.

"Electric slow cookers, properly used, are a great way to reap the benefits of long, slow cooking," said Susan Conley, manager of the Meat and Poultry Hotline.

"The direct, intense heat, combined with the bacteria-killing steam created within the tightly-covered container, makes the slow cooker a safe alternative to the risky process of cooking foods for extended periods at a very low temperature in a conventional oven," said Conley.

To ensure your slow-cooker foods are safe to eat, the Hotline offers the following advice:

1) Keep everything clean. Wash hands before and throughout food preparation. Begin with a clean cooker, clean utensils and a clean work area.

2) Keep perishable foods refrigerated until preparation time. The slow cooker may take several hours to reach a safe, bacteria-killing temperature. Constant refrigeration assures that bacteria, which multiply rapidly at room temperature, won't get a "head start" during the first few hours of cooking.

3) Meat and poultry should be completely thawed and cut into small pieces of like size to ensure thorough cooking. Do not use the slow cooker for large pieces, like a roast or whole chicken, because the food will cook so slowly it could remain in the bacterial "danger zone" too long.

Some slow-cooker recipes direct you to brown meat. Partial cooking is always risky, so cook meats thoroughly--until brown or grey throughout. If the meat is to be used later, refrigerate in shallow containers until ready to use.

4) Fill the slow cooker no more than two-thirds full. If the container is filled beyond its normal capacity, the heat may not penetrate all parts of the food.

5) Cover the meat or poultry pieces with liquid. Liquids, in addition to keeping meats and poultry moist and tender, are good conductors of heat.

6) Keep the lid in place. Remove the lid only as often as necessary to stir the food or check for doneness. Significant amounts of heat are lost each time the cooker is uncovered.

7) If possible, set the cooker on the highest setting for the first hour of cooking time. Then choose the setting called for in the recipe.

8) Store leftovers in shallow containers and refrigerate within two hours after cooking is finished.

9) Do not warm cooked foods or reheat leftovers in the slow cooker. Repeated handling can introduce bacteria to cooked foods, and the slow cooker cannot get hot enough fast enough to keep these bacteria from multiplying. If serving cooked food for a party or buffet, bring the food to a boil on the stove and then use the slow cooker to keep it piping hot.

For more information on preparing meat and poultry safely, call USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. Washington, D.C. residents may call (202) 720-3333.



